



ALTEXPLOIT 2017-09-24

# ŽIŽEK'S DIALECTICAL COINCIDENTIA OPPOSITORIUM

LEXICON, PHILOFICTION ŽIŽEK, IMAGINARY, LACAN, REAL, SPECTERS, SYMBOLIC

Without doubt, the cogent interlacing of Lacanian theorization with Hegelianism manifests Žižek's prowess in articulating a highly pertinent critique of ideology for our epoch, but whether this comes from a position of Marxist orthodoxy or a position of a Lacanian doctrinaire who monitors Marxist politics is an open question.

Through this Lacanian prism, Žižek sees subjectivity as fragmented and decentred, considering its subordinate status to the unsurpassable realm of the signifiers. The acquisition of a consummate identity dwells in impossibility, in as much as it is bound to desire, provoked by a lacuna which is impossible to fill up. Thus, for Žižek, socio-political relations evolve from states of lack, linguistic fluidity, and contingency. What temporarily arrests this fluid state of the subject's slithering in the realm of the signifiers, giving rise to her self-identity, is what Lacan calls *point de capiton*. The term refers to certain fundamental "anchoring" points in the signifying chain where the signifier is tied to the signified, providing an illusionary stability in signification. Laclau and Mouffe (***Hegemony and Socialist Strategy Towards a Radical Democratic Politics***) were the first to make use of the idea of the *point de capiton* in relation to hegemony and the formation of identities. In this context, ideology is conceptualized as a terrain of firm meanings, determined and comprised by numerous *points de capiton* (***Zizek The Sublime Object of Ideology***).

The real is the central Lacanian concept that Žižek implements in his rhetoric. He associates the real with antagonism (e.g., class conflict) as the unsymbolizable and irreducible gap that lies in the heart of the socio-symbolic order and around which society is formed. As Žižek argues, "class struggle designates the very antagonism that prevents the objective (social) reality from constituting itself as a self-enclosed whole" (***Renata Salecl, Slavoj Zizek–Gaze and Voice As Love Objects***). This logic is indebted to Laclau and Mouffe, who were the first to postulate that social antagonism is what impedes the closure of society, marking thus its impossibility. Žižek expanded this view and associated antagonism with the notion of the real.

Functioning as a hegemonic fantasmatic veil, ideology covers the lacuna of the symbolic, in the form of a fantasy, so that it protracts desire and hence subjectivity. On the imaginary level, ideology functions as the "mirror" that reflects antagonisms, that is to say, the real unrepresentable kernel that undermines the political. Around this emptiness of representation, the fictional narrative of ideology, its meaning, is to unfurl. The role of socio-ideological fantasy is to provide consistency to the symbolic order by veiling its void, and to foster the illusion of a coherent social unity.

Nevertheless, fantasy has both unifying and disjunctive features, as its role is to fill the void of the symbolic, but also to circumscribe this void. According to Žižek, "the notion of fantasy offers an exemplary case of the dialectical *coincidentia oppositorium*". On the one side, it provides a "hallucinatory realisation of desire" and on the other side, it evokes disturbing images about the Other's *jouissance* to which the subject has no (symbolic or imaginary) access. In so reasoning, ideology promises unity and, at the same time, creates another fantasy, where the failure of acquiring the anticipated ideological unity is ascribed.

Pertaining to Jacques Derrida's work Specters of Marx (***Specters of Marx The State of the Debt, The Work of Mourning; the New International***), where the typical ontological conception of the living is seen to be incomplete and inseparable from the spectre, namely, a ghostly embodiment that haunts the living present (Derrida introduces the notion of hauntology to refer to this pseudo-material incarnation of the spirit that haunts and challenges ontological present), Žižek elaborates the spectral apparitions of the real in the politico–ideological domain. He makes a distinction between this "spectre" and "symbolic fiction", that is, reality *per se*. Both have a common fantasmatic hypostasis, yet they perform antithetical functions. Symbolic fiction forecloses the real antagonism at the crux of reality, only to return as a spectre, as another fantasy.

taken from here

Foto: Bernhard Weber

← PREVIOUS NEXT →

META

CONTACT
FORCE-INC/MILLE PLATEAUX

IMPRESSUM
DATENSCHUTZERKLÄRUNG

TAXONOMY

CATEGORIES
TAGS
AUTHORS
ALL INPUT

SOCIAL

FACEBOOK
INSTAGRAM
TWITTER